In the Claims:

1. (Amended) A method for controlling a switching system which has a central control unit and a number of peripheral terminal devices, comprising:

sending a job message from one of the terminal devices to the control unit,

performing switching control actions by the control unit based on the job message; and

sending a corresponding performance message from the control unit to the terminal device when the switching control actions are successfully performed, wherein

at the terminal devices, any open job message for which the associated performance message has not yet arrived after expiration of a specified wait time from the time of sending is resent to the control unit and;

at the control unit, actions of the switching control based on an arrived job message are skipped if they were already processed by means of earlier job messages and/or are to be omitted on the basis of a preset rule.

2. (Amended) The method according to claim 1,

wherein when the job message is resent by the terminal device, the wait time for the arrival of the associated performance message starts to run again.

3. (Amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein at the terminal device, the wait time is determined individually according to a preset rule as a function of the type of job message.

4. (Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein at the terminal device the sending of additional job messages is delayed upon exhaustion of a send window which describes a preset maximum number of job messages not answered by a performance message.

5. (Amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein the send window comprises two job messages.

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6. (Amended) The method according to claim 4, wherein additional job messages whose sending is delayed owing to the exhaustion of the send window are buffered in a queue.

7. (Amended) The method according to claims 1, wherein at the control unit an acknowledgement message by the control unit to the terminal device is omitted in the event of an interruption of the performed actions owing to an error.

In the Abstract

N.E. Please replace the Abstract in its entirety with the Abstract attached hereto.

no original abstract